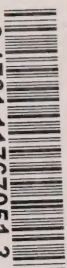


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BRIEF FROM THE

ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES AND

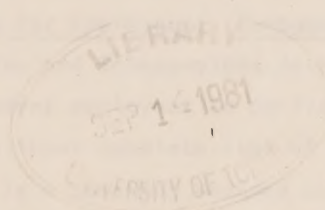
COLLEGES OF CANADA

TO THE

COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY ON EDUCATIONAL

LEAVE AND PRODUCTIVITY

February 1979



The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada is pleased to have the opportunity to make a presentation on behalf of the university community to the Commission of Enquiry on Educational Leave and Productivity. As employers and as educational institutions, the universities have a clear interest in the issues under consideration.

To assist the Commission in understanding the position of the universities with regard to paid educational leave (PEL), the Association presents the four following observations:

- 1- universities and their employees have mutually benefitted from educational leave;
- 2- non-university entities have had recourse to and have found useful the educational services provided by universities to members of their staff;
- 3- the services which the universities can provide to individuals, employers and society in the area of paid educational leave are somewhat restricted by the very nature of the purposes and activities of the universities;
- 4- the universities will be flexible in responding to society's needs in paid educational leave provided that the services required can legitimately be defined as being of university level.

Definition

In their excellent book, Educational Leave for Employees: European Experience for American Consideration, von Moltke and Schneevoight describe educational leave as "The opportunity for dependent employees to participate in education or training during working hours without complete loss of pay and without loss of employment rights".¹ This is a somewhat amended concept of PEL as presented by the International Labour Organization which maintains that PEL should "recognize the need for recurrent education to bolster job security, to assist workers in their personal and cultural development, and give greater access to trade union education".


Leaves in the universities

As employers, all universities have recognized the importance of granting educational leave to their professorial, administrative and support personnel. All universities have implemented sabbatical or study and research policies which allow faculty members to be relieved of their normal teaching and administrative duties, after a number of years of service to the institution and providing that the faculty members' department can make suitable arrangements, to allow them to pursue a program of independent study and research. Sabbatical leaves are normally of either six or twelve months' duration. The practice of taking a sabbatical leave provides an opportunity for faculty members to keep fresh their professional skills and knowledge and to acquire the new knowledge that has become available in their disciplines since their last leave or the termination of their formal education. As a support of excellence, sabbatical leaves are a benefit to the leave-taker, the home university and the academic community in general. Just as the benefits are shared, so too are the costs; in general, the leave stipend is less than the normal salary of the leave-taker, and additional costs are usually incurred by the leave-taker and his family. Even though administrative and support staff do not generally qualify for sabbatical leave, they normally have access to study and retraining leaves with full, partial or no pay.

Universities' role in PEL

As educational institutions, universities are one of the special resources available for providing PEL services. Because of their highly skilled personnel and extensive research facilities, universities are able to provide some services, such as professional up-grading, that cannot be offered by any other institution.

If a national PEL policy is adopted in Canada then all workers, from the unskilled manual labourer to the chief executive officer of a large corporation, should be eligible to participate in PEL activities. However, it is clear that the role of the universities in PEL will be somewhat limited to meeting the needs of individuals who will probably



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have achieved a high level of education and who will hold positions in the middle to upper range of the labour market. The types of education which may be considered under PEL requiring university involvement will include management education and education for the intellectually demanding positions, and general, social and civic education.

The subject matter in self-interest, non-degree courses can be conventional university offerings for part-time or full-time degree credit or can be elements of university offerings packaged to meet the requirements of a particular group of non-degree candidates. Central to this position is the view that universities have a special role that does not match the majority of learning objectives or the learners that would be an integral part of a labour market oriented PEL policy. For those functions which the universities can perform uniquely, there is evidence from experience that universities perform effectively.

A significant number of large public and private organizations, and an increasing number of small organizations, have for some time recognized what university specialists can do for their organizations in non-degree programs. It remains for university instructors to recognize that being "advised" on what subject matter within the instructor's competence is to be taught, while a possible inconvenience in the rearranging of well-worn teaching materials, is not necessarily a breach of academic freedom.

Nature of PEL

The Association believes that flexibility in the implementation and administration of a paid educational leave policy will be an essential feature if Canadian workers and employers, and society in general are to derive the optimum benefit from a PEL scheme. Some leaves may be for one or two days' duration, others for a year or more. One leave may be designed to equip a worker with a specific skill, while another may aim to improve the managerial and leadership abilities of a senior administrator or to enable an individual to take courses of a general, social or civic nature. The direct return to the employer and the degree of individual development

and personal enrichment are directly related to the type of paid educational leave taken. The length of time required to reach the objectives of each PEL will vary, as will the costs.

Universities' experience

Universities have a wide experience with instruction in many disciplines and at various levels. In addition to the lecture approach, a number of pedagogical techniques, such as the case method and laboratory work, have been utilized to better reach the educational objectives of various programs. It should also be noted that the time frame for university instruction may vary widely. In addition to full year courses, half year courses, semester courses, cooperative programs, six week (or lesser) summer school courses, universities have offered, through their continuing education divisions, multifarious non-credit courses of varying length from one day to perhaps several weeks at on campus and off-campus locations.

The universities demonstrated flexibility in offering credit and non-credit programs will be a definite asset in helping them meet some of the Canadian needs in PEL. They may be called upon to offer short programs to provide specialized skills or knowledge to professional practitioners or they may serve the important role of providing much longer programs to prepare highly qualified (academically and intellectually) people for a significant shift or change in their careers.

The levelling off and the predicted decrease in university enrolments in the 1980s make it practicable and feasible to use the physical and human resources of the universities to meet some of the PEL needs of employers, employees and society.

Limitations of PEL

The extensive literature developing on the subject of PEL² and on the arguably related subject of recurring education, appears to herald enthusiastically the arrival of this new panacea. One important caveat however is that PEL will not be and should not be considered as the imme-

diate cure to the country's economic ills. Paid educational leaves will undoubtedly have short-term economic benefits but their true worth, similar to the value of a university education, will be demonstrated in the medium and the long terms.

Far be it from educators to question that people will benefit from more education, but the extent to which they will benefit is a function of the education available to them, their motivation, and the extent to which they will have an opportunity to make use of that education. Similarly, the willingness of the employer, the "student", or the state to pay for education is a function of the benefit each expects to receive from that education.

Recently released evidence suggests that the majority of individuals taking continuing education courses are those who have already attained a high level of education, as demonstrated in Table A. In Learning Opportunities it is noted that "in general, those who rank higher in education, occupation and income tend to be more active consumers of adult education".³ This same paper estimates that 28.4% of Canada's adult population participate in adult education in its many forms. von Moltke and Schneevoight suggest that the propensity for further education is highly correlated with occupational status, at least in Europe.⁴

Potential participation in PEL

The potential numbers for PEL were estimated by Robert P. Rothschild.⁵ He estimates that 1.25 million of the nine million labour force of 1977 would not be "in the market" for PEL, but that one-half of the remaining 7.75 million would pursue opportunities offered to them. Of this group of 3.9 million, he estimates 80 percent would want community college courses, 10 percent Board of Education courses and 10 percent (390,000) would want university courses. He suggests these people would take courses of two weeks' duration on average or 780,000 person-weeks but with not more than 15,600 "on course" (1/25th of the total) at any one time. With sixty universities sharing this "pool", there would be an average of 250 such students

TABLE A

TABLE III-18

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HIGHEST LEVEL OF
EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS ATTAINED BY PART-TIME STUDENTS

taken from Part-Time Studies and University Accessibility, by Elizabeth Humphreys and John Porter, Carleton University, October 1978, p. 42

| Highest Level of Educational Credentials Attained | % |
|--|------------|
| None | 5 |
| High School Diploma | 39 |
| Community College Diploma | 7 |
| Teaching Diploma | 10 |
| Nursing Diploma | 2 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 25 |
| Graduate Degree | 6 |
| Other | <u>7</u> |
| Total Per Cent | <u>101</u> |
| (N) | 3,594 |

TABLE III-19

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS
ATTAINED BY PART-TIME STUDENTS BY SEX

| Highest Level of Educational Credentials Attained | Part-Time Students | |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| | Male | Female |
| | <u>%</u> | <u>%</u> |
| None | 6 | 4 |
| High School Diploma | 42 | 36 |
| Community College Diploma | 7 | 7 |
| Teaching Diploma | 3 | 15 |
| Nursing Diploma | - | 3 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 27 | 24 |
| Graduate Degree | 9 | 4 |
| Other | <u>6</u> | <u>8</u> |
| Total Per Cent | <u>100</u> | <u>101</u> |
| (N) | 1,638 | 1,936 |

per university fifty weeks per year. Clearly, in times of decreasing enrolments in the universities, these are numbers which could be easily accommodated.

It would appear that cost, time, job security and eligibility for PEL are all parts of the "price" so that various "mixes" of these four variables would be major determinants of who took PEL.

The price to the "consumer" should be a function of benefit realized; the greater the benefit to the employer, the greater the cost to be borne by the employer; the more general the benefit, the greater the cost to be borne by the public purse. However, the "price" includes the time required for the education experience. Alternation notes that "The essence of educational leave is that it should involve the reduction of some or all of an employed person's working time in order to allow him or her to pursue further study".⁶

Remedial role of PEL

One attractive feature of PEL is its potential for overcoming some of the errors and injustices of the past. Access to education, and particularly to higher education, was much more limited in previous decades than it is to-day. The fact that 49.6% of our population over five years of age not in school in 1971 had only grade IX or less and only 9.5% had one or more years of university, attest to the need for PEL to serve a remedial task (See Learning Opportunities for Adults, Vol. IV: Participation in Adult Education in Canada. OECD, Paris 1977). von Moltke and Schneevoight support this view:

There exists a powerful argument that those citizens who have not had an opportunity to acquire such skills (literacy, numeracy, articulateness, some basic analytic skills) in the initial phase of education should be given the opportunity to acquire them and those who have received more extensive education should be able to maintain what they have learned in an active and contemporary form.⁷

Particularly, a PEL policy must look to the women in and temporarily out of the workforce, who can benefit from an educational experience previously denied them simply because they were female. There should be special concern for this group because of the substantial potential they offer to employers and to society by virtue of their experience and latent ability. Women who were born prior to 1946 undoubtedly watched some of their intellectually inferior male counterparts go to university in the 40's, 50's and early 60's and now work for those same people today. The special concern should be reflected in employers' greater willingness to grant leaves of absence with job security and full financial entitlement for study for any first or graduate professional degree.

As is noted in Alternation, "...The opportunity for each member of the population to maintain and improve his intellectual development and social awareness may come (as have paid vacations, originally thought impossible and unnecessary) to be recognized as an essential, not a luxury".⁸

References

1. Konrad von Moltke and Norbert Schneevoight. Educational Leaves, for Employees; European Experience for American Consideration. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977. p. 7
2. Educational Leave; a preliminary annotated bibliography. Hamilton, Ont., Commission of Inquiry on Educational Leave and Productivity, 1978. 37 p.
3. Learning Opportunities for Adults. Paris, OECD, 1977. Vo. IV: Participation in Adult Education
4. von Moltke and Schneevoight, p. 230
5. Robert P. Rothschild, Adult Education Facilities in Canada (which is) Appendix A of J.K. Eaton's paper presented to the Canadian Association of Administrators in Labour Legislation, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, September, 1977
6. Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, Alternation Between Work and Education, A study of Educational Leave of Absence at Enterprise Level, Paris, OECD. 1978. p. 9
7. Learning Opportunities for Adults, vol. 4, p. 32-33
8. Alternation between work and education. p. 85

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